

authors base their name on *Otis afra* Linnaeus 1766 *Syst. Nat.* 12th Edition I: 264. Peters (1934) points out that this name is spelt *atra*: both are Latin words meaning "black". C. W. Benson (*in litt.*) advises that the text is not well printed but that the letter used by the printer is an "f". *Otis atra* is no more than a misreading of a badly printed text and is to be regarded at the best as an unjustified emendation.

However, Linnaeus 1758 *Syst. Nat.* 10th Edition I: 155 describes *Otis afra* as "O(tis) nigra, dorso cinereo, auribus albis. Habitat in Aethiopia. I Burmannus. Maris rostrum & pedes flavi. Vertex cinereus. Alarum margo exterior albus. Femina tota cinerea, exceptis femoribus abdomineque atris.". This is a clear description of *E. afra* and mentions the most obvious distinguishing character, the white "ears" (auribus albis). It is also the wording used in the 12th Edition (C. W. Benson *in litt.*). We therefore conclude that the original description of *E. afra* is contained in Linnaeus' 10th Edition of his *Systema Naturae* in volume I on page 155 and that this reference should be cited as the original sources of the name as occasion arises. The explanation for this lapse, as for *Serinus alario* (L.) (Brooke, 1967), is probably that British ornithologists used to work from Linnaeus's 12th Edition and that when the 10th Edition was accepted as the basis of nomenclature this point was not checked.

We are obliged to C. W. Benson for consulting Linnaeus's 12th Edition on our behalf.

#### References:

- Brooke, R. K. 1967. The original name of the Black-headed Canary *Serinus alario* (Linnaeus). *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 87: 123-124.
- Clancey, P. A. 1965. A catalogue of the birds of the South African sub-region I. *Durban Mus. Novit.* VII: 9: 201-304.
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- White, C. M. N. 1965. *A revised check list of African non-passerine birds*. Government Printer: Lusaka, Zambia.

## Schioler's Dunlin in Eire

by Jeffery Harrison

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As yet, the occurrence of Schioler's Dunlin *Calidris alpina arctica*, the breeding population from north-eastern Greenland, has only been recognised in the British Isles as a passage migrant through south-eastern England, between the dates of 14th May-7th June and 7th July-17th September (Harrison and Harrison, 1967).

Although the winter quarters of this distinctive race of Dunlin are still unknown, it seemed highly unlikely that its migration route should be restricted to the eastern side of the British Isles, when it is well known that many waders from Greenland and Iceland migrate southwards to Ireland and beyond.

Between 27th September and 10th October, 1968, while in Counties Cork and Kerry, Eire, I paid special attention to this species, which was not particularly numerous, the largest party seen being forty in Co. Cork. Almost all which were seen were closely examined and seemed to be typical

juveniles of the race *C. a. schinzii* with heavily spotted underparts. Only one was found which was thought in the field to be a possible Schioler's Dunlin, a single bird on the beach at Derrymore, Co. Kerry on 4th October.

This was collected and proved to be an immature female and quite typical of the race *C. a. arctica*. The bill measured 28 mm. from the feather margin, 23.5 mm. from the nostril. This compares with measurements given by Salomonsen (1950) for ♀♀ *C. a. arctica* of 27-31 mm. compared with 30.5-35 mm. for *C. a. schinzii*, while Harrison and Harrison (*loc. cit.*) give measurements from the nostrils for four ♀♀ *C. a. arctica* of 23-24.5 mm.

The plumage characters of this bird in comparison with *C. a. schinzii*, are also quite typical of *C. a. arctica*, the margins of the mantle feathers and scapulars being white or whitish-buff; the nape is paler and the striation finer, while the underparts are particularly pale with only minimal dark spotting on the flanks and narrow pectoral striations.

This is therefore the first example of Schioler's Dunlin from Eire, and is the latest date on which one has been identified in the British Isles.

I am very grateful to my father, Dr. James Harrison, who has confirmed my identification of this specimen.

#### References:

- Harrison, James M. and Harrison, Jeffery G. (1967). "The occurrence of Schioler's Dunlin in south-eastern England; a race new to the British Isles." *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 87: 142-148.
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## The status of the Black Noddy in the Tristan da Cunha Group

by *George E. Watson*

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Authors who have considered the avifauna of the Tristan da Cunha Group in the South Atlantic Ocean have puzzled over the status of the Black or Lesser Noddy *Anous tenuirostris* (= *A. minutus*) on Inaccessible Island. The single record comes from the Challenger Expedition which collected a nearly fledged juvenile 16th October, 1873. Not only is the date of the Challenger Expedition specimen remarkably early in the season for fledging in an otherwise tropical species, but the circumstances surrounding its capture are somewhat suspect. Furthermore, no subsequent ornithological expedition to Tristan has found the species. I have borrowed the specimen from the British Museum (reg. no. 80-11-18-720) and must reluctantly agree with Elliott (1957) that it is indeed a Black Noddy (see appendix).

The Brown or Common Noddy *Anous stolidus*, on the other hand, breeds on all three islands in the Tristan Group and on Gough Island 250 miles further south. Elsewhere the species nests almost exclusively on the ground but on Inaccessible and Gough Islands it nests regularly or exclusively in *Phylica* trees. The tree nests are constructed of twigs and leaves, while ground nests are rudimentary. Egg laying begins in mid October and hatching in mid November in the Tristan Group. The Black Noddy, which breeds on the same islands and at about the same time as the Brown Noddy throughout most of their tropical range, generally builds a substantial nest of twigs or seaweed in trees or in niches on steep cliffs.